



Baldwin Hills Community Standards District Community Health Assessment Summary

In response to health concerns voiced by residents in communities near the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD), the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is planning a Community Health Assessment. The focus of this assessment will be on the population living in communities surrounding the CSD. The assessment will include three components: 1) analysis of mortality rates and patterns in the selected population based on data reported to the Department on death certificates, 2) analysis of cancer rates and patterns based on data compiled by the USC Cancer Surveillance Program, and 3) self-reported illness, including asthma, and other health concerns based on data reported in a planned community health survey.

The community health survey will be funded with \$155,000 provided to the Public Health Department by the County of Los Angeles Second Supervisorial District Office will be implemented in mid-2010. The survey will include a randomly selected sample of approximately 1,000 adults living near the CSD, and will be conducted by telephone to maximize the number of participants given the available funding. To further increase participation, the survey will be offered in English and Spanish. Telephone calls will be made on weeknights and weekends as well as weekdays. Interviews will be 15 minutes in length and will be done using a questionnaire developed by the Department with input from the community.

Data compiled from the three components of the assessment will provide a profile of the health of the population near the CSD. To assist in interpreting the findings, results of the mortality and cancer analyses will be compared with countywide mortality and cancer statistics.

It is important to note that, although the Community Health Assessment will provide an overall picture of the current health of the population, it will not provide information on the causes of reported disease and illness given the many factors at both the individual and environmental levels that influence health. For example, a high rate of asthma in the community adjacent to the CSD would not prove that oil field operations are causing cases of asthma given the many other potential causes, such as exposures to traffic-related air pollution, tobacco smoke, or adverse environmental conditions in the home. Alternatively, a normal or low rate of asthma would not prove that the oil field is safe, again because of the many other factors that could be influencing the rate. The health of the community can best be assured by careful, ongoing monitoring of exposures from oil field operations, as enforced through the regulations and standards set forth in the CSD.

Questions or requests for additional information on the Community Health Assessment should be directed to Cyrus Rangan, Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's Toxic Epidemiology Program at (213) 738-3220.